

[COPTRIORT, 1895.]

The most uncomfortable case that I sver had to deal with, said a detective in the employ of one of the great dry was the affair of Mrs. Caleb Willett. To begin, let me say that there was no Sherlock Holmes in mine. I did not deduce the fact from a hundred nothings; I had no theory, no exciting trail to follow, and heaven knows that I was sorry from my heart for the poor creature. I would have liked to get out of the whole business as soon as I saw her-for I knew that, whatever

her crime might be, her punishment was going to be a misfit.

It was one of those dull December afternoons, with a chill that threads through the marrow of your bones, when there is a whitish dust blowing the marrow of the state of the sta everywhere, and it wants to snow and can't make up its mind to begin. I was in the little room where Messrs, Denim & Crepon keep me till called for—and the calls are pretty frequent for me to escort shoplifters upstairs, and then wait politely outside until our Mrs. Tripp—a good, sharp woman she is—has searched them. I could tell some good stories about the tricks that I have known these light-fingered ladies to play. But this is a different anecdote.

Well, the call was rung in from the lace counter and I recent the counter the counter will be seen to the counter the counter the counter that the counter the counter that the counter the counter that the co

lace counter, and I went there. The saleswoman is a friend of mine; in fact, saleswoman is a friend of mine; in fact, she is the nicest girl in the world, and one of these days-but that isn't the aneodote either. Lucy was white round the lips, and no wonder, for the only customer at the lace counter was Mrs. Willett, the widow of old Caleb Willett. so respectable and dignified and wealthy that it was like advertising a variety show to play in Grace church to mention any sort of misbehavior in the same breath with her name. "Either this is a case of a sudden at-

tack of kleptomania or Lucy has made a bad blunder; and I hope it may not lose my girl her place." said I to my

"A handkerchief of point de Brux-

elles," said Lucy.
I was uncertain what I ought to do Mrs. Willett turned to me. Her face looked gray and drawn, and her eye had a strange expression. When she spoke her voice was not only husky but suffected, I thought.

"I shall make no trouble," she tole ne. "I will go where you please." me. "I will go where you please.

So I took her up to our Mrs. Tripp
Mr. Denim saw the procession of two

Of course, it wasn't regular, but Mr. Denim or any other man would not have dared to refuse her. So away I went with my lady, taking great care of my manners, not to cut across her feelings, as near as I could guess at them. It seemed a long drive before we reached her house, somewhere in the region of Washington square. Her maid came out to meet her and carry in her wraps, a French girl that made me think of a skirt dancer brought up by Shakers. I guess she came from Paris a number of years ago, and had been in the Willett's house ever since.

"Delphine," said her mistress, "this young geutleman, the son of a school friend of mine, is come to visit me for a

few days."
Poor lady, she spoke hoarser than before, and yet with a sharp note which didn't belong to her voice.
"I hope, madame, that you have not

taken a cold. That would be a pity when this monsieur is just arrived to make the house a little gay for you, after so long time that it is triste," it id the French girl.
I can tell you I was badly scared to

have to sit down to dinner with that great lady; and yet, after 1 got the run of the different forks and wine glasses, I wished that Lucy could be a mouse I wished that Lucy could be a mouse in the wall for a few minutes, to see me in with the Four Hundred. And she could have told you, better than I can, what Mrs. Willett wore. It was gray velvet, with a smoky yellow have thing on her shoulders, that, no doubt, was worth according to the county of thing on her shoulders, that, no doubt, was worth enough money to set Luoy and me up in housekeeping, if we had so much. The bodiec was cut square. She had a magnificent figure for her age, had Mrs. Willett. There was a close necklaco set with great rubies around her threat. I hated to look at it for it appears to the control of the c been cut off, and showed the red line of drops of blood. But she was as hand-some as one of those heathen goddesses at the museum.

After dinner she talked a great deal, although she was very hourse, and she often put her hand to her chest, as if about? Oh, anything; the news of the day mostly. Before eleven o'clock she excused herself, on account of her

'And I have something to do-son thing to do," she muttered, as if she were talking to herself.

Now, I have known people to slip ight from under a detective's hands and over the borders of death. And here is no extradition treaty between he United States and the next world. nd over the borders of death.

the guessed what I was thinking about "I will not evade you in any way, "I see nothing better



*I SHALL NOT FORGET THAT QUARTER OF AN HOUR.

who had been caught shoplifting. He followed us, for he could not believe is true. Once in awhile we have had to apologize to innosource; but ninety-nine times out of a hundred we are right. And then the thicers either are sent up to the island or else they ery and plead that they mover did so before, and nover will steal again, and we let them off and send is the bill to their husbands. send in the bill to their husbands-end I have the most charity for those who go away in the Black Maria instead of their own carriages.

beir own carriages.
When our Mrs. Tripp was ready to search Mrs. Willett, one sign of the

her at a distance, "You shall not touch me," Mrs. Willett told her. "And you, young man, meed not leave the room. Mr. Denim, here is the lace."

She let her muff fall from her hands. Mr. Denim took it up from the floor, and, sure enough, there was the hand-kerchief, marked eighty-five dollars, in age, that is—that I ever saw; tall and rigid, like a stone statue. Her pride really seemed to take the place of up-rightness. She might be a thief, but she looked as if she came from some world where plain virtues don't count. Let me go to the house," she said.

I sneaking behind her as if it were I aid it as far as possible. I win not who had been caught shoplifting. He evade you. I promise it upon my honor

That was odd talk for a shoplifter—though they say that there is honor among thieves. But I would have knocked the head off any man who should have doubted the honor of that grand woman. She waited an instant then bade me good-night and went upstairs. I ought to have told you that before dinner she had shown me over the house. I had noticed that there were no double windows; that there were no harmful drugs like morphine or chloral on her toilet table; even the penknife in her work-basket was a reg-ular woman's knife, not sharp enough to cut a pencil. And I pocketed that, to make sure. I have it now for a to make sure. I have it now for a keepsake of that poor lady. Well, she had not the means to commit suicide, and she had sworn that she would not have the said to be a sure that she would not have the said to be a sure that she would not have the said to be a sure that the said that the said to be a sure that the said to be a sure that the said that the

her.
When she went upstnirs I could tell
by the direction of the sound of her plain figures. Mrs. Willett's check steps that she did not go to ber own flushed by this time, a round, red blot chamber, but to another room which on each, and she coughed a little. She she had told me belonged to her dead son. It was natural enough that she age, that is—that I ever saw; tall and specified the should enter it, with all her trouble of the should enter it, with all her trouble of the should enter it. should enter it, with all her trouble of mind that night. I went to my room, but could not sleep. Mrs. Willett was always before my eyes. I seemed to see her clearer than when she was really near me; the cold, glittering brightness of her eyes, the foverish

escape from me. And I had faith in

over everything, a sort of solemn smile woman must have been as near in her countenance as if she and time

had no longer to do with each other. At last I got to sleep, but woke again before dawn, just as the outlines of the heavy, old-fashioned wardrobe and tollet table were beginning to show, and the air had a blackish grayness as if night had been ground to powder and would soon blow away. I heard Mrs. Willett pass my room and go to her . Then she must have watched all night in her son's room-poor soul!

When the darky footman brought When the darky footman orought me a can of hot water and my boots he told me that Mrs. Willett was ill with a cold on the chest. She hoped to rise later. I was to entertain myself, so I passed the day in the library reading "Trilby." That is a book that talks to you where you live, whatever you know or don't know. Now, I can't tell an old master from a tea-store chromo, nor one note of music from an other, but I can just see those English fellows paint and hear Trilby sing. And that's the genius of the book.
In the afternoon—to go on with my

story-Delphine came and told me that mistress was very ill; the doctors had a consultation. It was a case of double pneumonia and some sort of a nervous shock, which they couldn't account for. Anyway, she was going to die. And it was the tenth anniver-sary of the death of her son, who was killed on the doorsteps of his father's house—a frightful affair, Delphine house—a frightful affair, Delphine said. The French woman, on her own responsibility, had sent for a sister of charity, who was now taking care of Mrs. Willett.

An hour later Delphine came to me again. "Madam wishes to see you, monsieur," she said. "If you could say something to comfort her! Speak to her of times when you saw her in



IT WAS THE ROOM OF A RATHER FRISKS

company with madam, your mother Agreeable memories might console

Great pleasure she would have, poor lady, in a reminder of the first that she and I had met, the day before! I followed Delphine to Mrs. Willett's room. She called in a low voice to Sister Perpetua, who came forward and asked me to enter. The chamber was asked me to enter. The chamber was somewhat darkened. I could see Mrs. Willett's white face, framed in iron-gray hair, and her hands twitching upon the crimson counterpane. She opened her large black eyes and looked at me. It seemed as if she held me by me. It seemed as if she held me by those eyes, so that I was bound to hear and remember every word that she had to say. And I shall not forget that quarter-hour-not until I pass in my own last report. She spoke in short phrases, because the breath only came from her throat now, her lungs were solid. There was a bluish shadow around her mouth and nostrils, like the shadow that the smoke of a locomo-

tive casts upon a field of snow.

I felt mean; I wanted to lynch myself, for it seemed to me that I had hunted that grand creature with the pitcous eyes to her death. Of course that wasn't so; I had only done my duty, and she already had a cold on her chest when she came into Denim & Crepon's. But the nervous shock-of course I had a hand in that. The only way I could let myself off easy was to keep thinking that I had only done my duty. But if ever such a case comes into the day's work again I will pull out of my job, and Denim & Grepon must look out for a tougher man. Well, Mrs. Willett began to speak to me. I could see that her mind went off a little now and then. But she knew

what she was talking about. her manner was very polite, as if I were a visitor that she was entertaining; later, she appeared to talk because she must, and it was heartbreaking to hear her. I should have broken down more than once, only there was Sister Perpetna, calm and almost smiling. I don't

petna, caim and almost smilling. I don't know how they do it, those sisters; they are full of pity, and yet they never seem to get rattled nor shed a tear. "I gave my word that I would not evade you," Mrs. Willett said to me. "This morning, indeed, I feared that I should be forced to break my promise. But one could not blame a deed ware. But one could not blame a dead woman for not keeping an appointment, could one? And now I am much botter.

could one? And now I am much potter. Earlier, I could not speak. It is a very severe cold, the doctor says."

"I am glad that you are feeling bet-ter, madam," said I, awkwardly

enough. But the truth is, it will not last. I shall escape the law here on earth. But I shall not escape the law in the next world-I shall go straight to hall, you know! Oh, I shall be so happy there!"

"Heaven, you mean, dear," Sister Per-



MR. DEMISON TOOK IT UP FROM THE FLOOR.

before I shall have explained all. I, a woman to steal so much-\$12,000. It want it to be known that I have stolen, stolen, for eight years. And now I need not steal any more. They took away the lace handkerchief, but they cannot take away from me my sin and its ever lasting punishment. They cannot touch that. And I am glad!

that. And I am glad!
"I will tell you all about it. Edwin, that was my son; my own dear, dear little boy. Ah, bye-low, bye-low, rock--bye baby!"

a-bye baby!"

It was terrible to hear that poor mother sing in her stifled, broken voice, laying one arm in the other and rocking it as if it were a young child. Then she gave a little scream and came to herself. "Sister Perpetua, as you have mercy.

do not let me loso myself again before I have told everything. What was I saying? Yes, my son Edwin. He was not bad. You must not believe that. I swear it. He was not had. And he was not be was not loved his mother. He did not love his father. His father was hard on him. Mr. Willett would blame my boy for reading a novel on Sunday, as if he had broken all the commandments. 'He that sins breaks the whole law,' Edwin's father would say. My sop liked to do as others did. No worse than the others. When I could I gave him money. I sold some jewels, but my hus-band missed them and asked for them. They were not mine. Only to wear. They were an investment. You know They were an investment. You know how some women live like queens and have not a dollar to spend as they please. That was the way with me. I have all Mr. Willett's money now. But it is ten years that I have not my son. Now I am going to find Edwin. Money will be of no use in hell—it would melt, would it not?" would it not?"

She was wandering again, poor soul. Sister Perpetua gave her a spoonful of something from a vial. I noticed that the good sister began to look scared, and that made me feel a little lonesome. Mrs. Willett went on talking, all on one note, dull and hollow, like the wood-pecker tapping, as you might say.
"Edwin had debts. For horses, wines,

tailors' bills-I do not know what. Poor boy, he could not pass through certain streets, for fear of the crue men whom he owed. He was his fa-ther's clerk. His salary was no more than that of the other clerks. He took twelve thousand dollars from the safe. If a speculation which he made had succeeded, he would have replaced the money. But the market had dropped. And that money was only borrowed— an advance on what would some day an individual of the control ther found out about the deficit in the safe, and cursed him, and sent for the police. Edwin could have escaped. But he stayed to kiss his mother good-by. I hurried him out of the house. The officers called to him to stand still He leaped down the steps to run. They sprang at him; he stumbled and fell That killed my boy. I carried him in my own arms into the house. They could not take him, dead, to prison. So I had him all to myself for awhile. His father would not look at him. He told me that my son was in hell.
"I wished to have my child buried

quietly, without persons coming to stare at him. His father would have all the relatives bidden. The clergyman said at the funeral that my son was in hell. Mr. Willett told him to say that. Told him to make Edwin serve as a warning to the young men of his kindred. I never went to church after that day. No matter what the preacher might say, I should always near him declare that my son is in hell.

"A year later Mr. Willett had paraly-is. I took care of him faithfully. There never was a word spoken be-tween us about Edwin. When Mr. Willett was dying he said to me: 'Susanna, you have been a good wife to me. I hope to meet you above. I closed his eyes; and began to plan how to avoid him in eternity. For I want to live forever with my boy. He loved me. His father did not love me. He could not love anything but money and respectability. I trust that he has them where he is. Of course he is in Heaven, for he always did what he heaven, for he always and what he thought right. But for virtue such as his, there ought to be a Heaven with hard golden pavements and no love. He would enjoy that. As for me, I

will go with my son,
"Now, listen: I thought that if my
Edwin must go to hell for stealing,
that would be the way for me, too.

would take a long time. But I could wait. I stole, stole, where I could. I was such a comfort to me. Every trifle -a fan, a bracelet--brought me a step at an, a bracelet—brought me a step further on the way that my son went. When I first thought of this plan I was so happy that I hughed aloud. My good Delphine feared that I was going mad. For my son had not been dea

mad. For my son had not been dead two years—and I was laughing.
"I have never permitted advone to enter his room. I have dusted it every day myself. It is precisely as he left it. Everything which I stole I carried there. And I know that Edwin has seen how hard I have tried to come to him. It has been the second to the sec him. It has been like digging a tunne -down, down, down-with my teeth and nails. I have kept the account of all that I stole. It is in a ledger there debit and credit. I have paid my pas sage to hell. Names of shops, prices of articles, date of theft, all are written in that book-\$12,000 with that final \$55, I registered the lace last night. And I arranged the articles according as they belong to different shops. Will you take them back for me to those shops-after ward? And pay whatever is right for keeping the goods out so long? They will call me a kleptomaniac, you know. They will pity me, perhaps. But I shall not need pity—for I shall be safe in hell with my son."

Then she turned sharply toward Sister Perpetua, who was running her beads through her fingers in what you might call a confusion of prayer and scare. I don't suppose that the good nun had ever heard anybody talk like that in all her life. And the sisters of charity see pretty much every sort, too. They wouldn't care for a macadamized golden street—they deserve a soft place in the best kind of another world, for they practice good will and mercy in this one. As I was saying, Mrs. Willett turned sharp on Sister Perpetua and used plain language to her.

You say that I ought to wish to g to Heaven. You do not understand. tell you that the name is nothingheaven or heil. For me the good place is where my boy is! Stop praying if you believe that your prayers will keep me away from him. Have I worked hard at sin for eight long years to have you secure my pardon at last? Stop praying! Do you want to send me where Caleb Willett claws his golden harp with fingers that clutch us if h were counting money, with a golden erown on his doddering head? Do you suppose that I should care to meet him again? And the relatives who gloated over my poor boy and blamed him in his coffin? For all these years I have been doing evil in order to go to find my son. I would not have done so much to meet his father again. And yet that would have been almost worth it! I was alone in mourning for my child. Now he will be all mine! All

mine, my dear little Edwin!"
Then Mrs. Willett's voice was choked that we could hardly catch her words. They were dreadful:
"Fire, fire, and the worm that dieth

not. His father said that. My poor boy, do not be afraid. Mother is com-

ing."
The pupils of her eyes grew larger, as if the light were falling before them. Then—and I am glad to remember it—the trouble and strain passed away from her face. She lifted herself a little put out her server. little, put out her arms toward some-thing that the sister and I could not see, and then fell back dend While Sister Perpetua was doing the

while Sister Perpetus was using the last offices for the poor lady, I went into the son's chamber. It was the room of a rather frisky fellow, for a fact. On the walls there were photographs of actresses and race horses; lying about were cigarette cases, scarf ying about were cigarette cases, scari pins, theater programmes, light gloves, a high-heeled red satin alipper, a per-fumed note or two—all that sort of rubbish. A boy that thought he was seeing life; but I don't think that he was a bad sort on the whole. I am bound to believe so, for his mother swore it to me. And she was a woman of honor All the stolen goods were there, ac cording to schedulo, and arranged as she had said. I went over her accounts, and they were correct. She had stolen to the amount of an even twelve thou sand dollars.

After the funeral I got Sister Per petua to help me to pack up the finery. It needed a woman's hand, though Lucy would have done it better, being ustomed to such things. I Mrs. Willett; somehow, it doesn't seem fair. Perhaps I chall tell her after we are married, next summer. A man ought to tell his wife everything—isn't

that about right?

As I said, Sister Perpetua and I As I said, Nester Perpetua and I packed up the goods; they were send back to the owners, and it was all made square and hushed up. Of course, Mrs. Willett's lawyer had to know about the business, and he talked kleptomaria. Nothing supprises New York tomania. Nothing surprises New York much. Well, I could not help telling Sister Perpetus that, according to my belief, Mrs. Willett and her son would be agreeply disappointed in be agreeably disappointed in regard to their place in the next world. Because she was surely a noble-hearted woman, and a mother as real as they make them. And it wasn't likely that make them. And it wasn't likely that her son was half a bad fellow. In fact, she said that he was not. And we sail of us run off the track sometimes. Then I saw that I had made a bad break and corrected myself: "Not you, of course, sister. The most of us, I meant to say."

"We will trust that love has some?" 'We will trust that love has saved

those two poor souls together," answered Sister Perpetus.

MEAT FOR THE WEDDING. She Was Bound to Have Ham at Auy Cost. I was sitting on a keg of nails in the

store, which was part and parcel of the mountain mining company's outfit, when a saffron "complected" woman in a sloomicky calico gown and a col-lapsed sunbonnet came in and addressed herself to me. "Air you the storekeeper?" she inquired.

"No," I replied, "but if there is anything you want in a hurry, I can accommodate you, I guess. The store

commodate you, I guess. The store keeper has gone over to the mill for a few minutes.' "Well, I was thinkin' uv gittin' a ham of meat," he said, hesitatingly.

"I can get that for you."
"It won't be no trouble, will it?" "Oh, no; I'll only have to carry it in

here. "What's the price uv a ham?" she asked, as I started out.

asked, as I started out.

"It will cost you about three dollars."

"Whew!" she exclaimed, "that's a
good deal of money, ain't it?",

"Yes, if you haven't much."

"Well, I hain't got a big pile."

"Why don't you get side meat? That
will cost you ten cents a pound, and
you can take as little as you want."

She threw up her head and sniffed
the air haughtily.

"Not no side meat fer me," she said,
with the air of a queen. "We'uns is
goin' to have a weddin' an' a infair

with the air of a queen. "We'uns in goin' to have a weddin' an' a infair atterwerds, an' side meat ain't no fittin' eatin' fer a thing like that. No, siree, we air goin' to have ham meat ef it takes all the money I got, an' a mor-gidge on the furniture in the house to

Fortunately the mortgage wasn't necessary.—Detroit Free Press.

Spotled by Overdoing.

Cholly (on his knees)—Maud, you have intoxicated me with your charms. Maud-Pshaw! You're no match fo

Cholly-Why not?

Maud-You get drunk too easily.-Town Topics.

Lasts of a Comprom Mr. Winterbottom—Emily, the doctor says all we need for these colds of ours

is whisky and quinine.

Mrs. Winterbottom—Cyrus, if you think you're going to get any whisky down my throat you are much mis

"And I haven't a particle of faith in quinine. So I brought them in sepa rate packages. Here's your quinine. -Chicago Tribune.

Why They Are Silent. Why They Are Sieut.

"Did you read." he swently asked her,

"That poem I wrote last week!"

"I read it years ago." she said.

And now they do not speak.

—Spare Moments.

FAMOUS FOLK ON WHEELS.

Lillian Russell confines her wheeling to bicycle schools at present. Editor Charles A. Dana is said to be

a convert to the joys of bicycling. Richard Mansfield is said to be a veritable Beau Brummel on a bicycle.

Queenie Vassar rides with the case and grace acquired only by long practice. Japan's boast that she has adopted civilization with a capital C is undoubtedly true. The mikado rides a bicycle.

Nat Goodwin is such a wheeling crank that he carries a bicycle with him when he is playing all over the country. Cissy Fitzgerald, with the proverbial

wink, takes the greatest delight in the world in showing her superior knowl-edge of the wheel. It is stated by those who know that

the king of Belgium always has a tri-cycle included among his luggage when he happens to be absent from his capital.

Mme. Karony, the beautiful Syrian oman who played so prominent a part in woman's affairs at the World's fair and has since resided in this country, is very much interested in wheeling costume consists of a pair of Turkish bloomer trousers with leggings, surmounted by a zouave jacket and blouse

White "Wash Silk" Won't Wash.

It is a curious thing that the only wash silk" nowadays used in fancy work about which one has trouble white. The delicate pinks and blues and greens come from a judiciously applied bath with their pristine glories untarnished. But white, so far as known, will persistently turn yellow, and nothing can be found to remedy it. REAL ESTATE AGENTS

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27 Faikhand atroet, 179 Faikhand ares no.
172 Glubs avenue, 163 Highland ares no.
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roll retring.

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